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ABSTRACT

This essay argues that the history of the international system has revolved around a moving frontier of cultural exclusivity. It is one of a series of working papers commissioned by the World Models Project in its effort to stimulate research, education, dialogue, and political action aimed at contributing to a movement for a just world order. Originating under monotheism, the cultural frontier has been characterized by a persistent "us/them" dichotomy. Civilizations which anthropomorphized God in monarchical terms tended to divide the world between the God-fearing and sinner. This tendency was reinforced by the culture of politics which differentiated supports from adversaries. Both were embodied in early international law such that a system of rules for civilized nations did not apply to "them"--the rest of the world--thus opening the door to imperialism and eventual class stratification in the international system. Although the cultural frontier has been moving due to secular challenges, the major challenges to Judaeo-Christian monotheism--Marxism and Islam--are themselves dualistic: the Marxist dialectic is inherently of this nature as is the tension between good and evil in Islam. The interrelationship between major cultural themes in today's world, coupled with a developmental system of stratification which is based on technical know-how, suggests that important but hidden problems of a cultural nature are contained in the world order agenda. (Author/RM)

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The Moving Cultural Frontier of World Order:

From Monotheism to North-South Relations

ALI A. MAZRUI

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This paper is one in a series of working papers commissioned by the World Order Models Project in its effort to stimulate research, education, dialogue and political action aimed at contributing to a movement for a just world order. The WOMP paper series deals with the major global problems facing humanity today within an analytic and normative framework guided by the concepts and values of peace, economic well-being, social justice, and ecological balance. Like other work in WOMP, the series gives appropriate consideration to the necessity and feasibility of structural transformation of today's fragmented world for the resolution of these problems and the achievement of just world order results.

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THE MOVING CULTURAL FRONTIER OF WORLD ORDER: FROM MONOTHEISM TO NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS*

Ali A. MAZRUI†

This essay argues that the history of the international system has revolved around a moving frontier of cultural exclusivity. Originating under monotheism, the cultural frontier has been characterized by a persistent "us/them" dichotomy. Civilizations which anthropomorphized God in monarchical terms tended to divide the world between the God-fearing and the sinner. This tendency was reinforced by the culture of politics which differentiated supporters from adversaries. Both were embodied in early international law such that a system of rules for civilized nations did not apply to 'them' – the rest of the world, thus opening the door to imperialism and eventual class stratification in the international system.

Although the cultural frontier has been moving due to secular challenges, the major challenges to Judaeo-Christian monotheism – Marxism and Islam – are themselves dualistic: the Marxist dialectic is inherently of this nature as is the tension between good and evil in Islam. The interrelationship between major cultural themes in today's world, coupled with a developmental system of stratification which is based on technical know-how, suggests that important but hidden problems of a cultural nature are contained in the world order agenda.

Dichotomous framework of world order perceptions

The "us/them" confrontation is the most persistent theme in world order perceptions. The dichotomy can take a variety of forms – the native versus the foreigner, the friend versus the foe, the familiar versus the strange, the

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Orient versus the Occident, the East versus the West, the North versus the South, the developed versus the developing countries, and so on. This dichotomous framework of world order perceptions amounts to an iron law of dualism, a persistent conceptualization of the world in terms of "us" and "them". To what extent is this mode of thinking a product of culture? Is it inevitable? Are we prisoners of dualism?

My first proposition is that in most, if not all, parts of the world, the culture of *politics* (though not necessarily of economics) tends towards dualism. The "us" versus "them" tendency is, in the political arena, almost universal. It could be friend versus foe, supporter versus opponent, ally versus adversary, conformist versus dissident, loyalist versus other. The range of cultural examples is also wide – from Whigs and Tories to the tensions between Confucians and legalists in the Chinese political tradition.

Although a certain level of dualism is inescapable in political thinking, the *degree* of dualism is culturally relative: societies vary considerably in how they perceive the wider world, with some paradigms more dualistic than others. My more complicated thesis, therefore, is that, paradoxically, monotheism is particularly dualistic, though not uniquely so. There is a tendency in monotheism to divide the human race between believers and unbelievers, between the virtuous and the sinful, between good and evil, between "us" and "them." In the monotheistic tradition, there is only one God, with no rival, who commands all loyalty and all obedience. The lines begin to be drawn precisely because one is either for or against God.

In contrast, polytheistic religions like those found in parts of Africa and Asia are more tolerant. To some degree, this tolerance stems from the readiness to accommodate additional gods: so what is an extra god between friends? Hardly any religious wars were fought in Africa before the intrusion of Islam and Christianity. African traditional religions permitted different ethnic groups to have their own gods, and divine plurality was the order of the day.

Yet to suggest that all religions are either monotheistic or polytheistic is to commit the sin of dualism. Many religions in India and parts of Africa incorporate both monotheistic and polytheistic elements. And a religion like Zoroastrianism could be regarded as diatheistic – having more than one but fewer than three gods.

What is clear is that the Judeo–Christian–Islamic paradigm is more dichotomous than the paradigms normally encountered in polytheistic cultures. The three Middle Eastern religions are also all monotheistic. Is there a causal link between their tendency to dichotomize and their monotheism? Is there a link between the powerful idea of one universal God and the dangerous dualism of 'us' versus 'them'?

A major purpose of this essay is to demonstrate the strong tendency

toward the paradigm of bipolarity which is manifested in monotheistic dualism and to explore its impact on contemporary world politics and international relations. Our second concern is to try to demonstrate that at the international level the class structure of the world is often defined in cultural rather than economic terms. The third thrust of our analysis is to illustrate how, in the absence of world government, the idea of 'community' at the transnational level has come to be defined in terms of shared values and culture rather than shared political authority. There is indeed a cultural theme at the center of the history of the international system – complete with a moving frontier of cultural exclusivity. Let us now turn to these theses in greater detail.

The origins of sacred order

We mentioned earlier that the dual paradigm in world order thinking has been shaped by two factors – by the culture of politics, which tends to dichotomize, and by the impact of monotheism on world culture. The two ideas – culture of politics and monotheism – were fused in the earlier versions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. God was conceived in the image of the king, often complete with a throne. Monotheistic thought in these three religions, then, not only anthropomorphized God but also royalized Him with terms like 'majesty' and 'the kingdom of God' central to religious discourse. The emphasis on the oneness of God tended to attract the kingly metaphor, a unique throne. The universe thus became one massive imperial order.

It would also seem that the God of these three monotheistic religions had a royal court of his own. The courtiers were angels, usually committed to continuous flattery of the king. Hymns and prayers emphasized that the king was almighty, omnipotent, omniscient, all-powerful – Glory be to God, Hallelujah! But, like most royal courts, God's court was not without intrigue. The only intrigue which had been recorded in *human* annals in any detail was the one which culminated in Satan's rebellion. Satan, jealous of the creation of Adam, finally found the will to rebel against the culture of constant flattery, constant prayer and devotion, and unmitigated submissiveness to the king. If the English poet, John Milton, is to be believed, Satan was driven to conclude that: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!"

The paradigm of dichotomy, so characteristic of the culture of politics, is captured in that line from *Paradise Lost*. Indeed, the very dichotomy of Heaven and Hell is part of the grand divide between rewards and sanctions which characterizes political authority. The notion of loyality to the king,

leading to heavenly rewards, and treason to God leading to damnation and hellfire, was a stark polarization embedded in those earlier versions of monotheistic divine order.

Of the three religions we mentioned, Christianity tried to balance the majesty of God with the humbleness of His Son. The Prince of Peace was born in a stable, preached among the poor, and praised both poverty and humility. It was a measure of Jesus' sacrifice that He descended from the ultimate Royal House to mingle with the meek on earth and to die for them. For God to send His own Son to earth was a major act of policy, a political act of momentous importance. It had to be balanced with another major political act here on earth – the sentencing of Jesus to crucifixion. But here Christian dualism gets intermingled with the concept of trinity, posing problems of political authority. The idea of three-in-one and one-in-three provides us with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. But one momentous Friday, God the Son was crucified. Was there a crisis of authority in the universe? Are we to say that for three cataclysmic days, when Jesus was dead, the universe as a whole was under the majesty of only two-thirds of God – one of which was a ghost? The tendency to think of the relationship between God and the universe in terms of majestic authority should have created a crisis of legitimacy for those three days when part of the king was dead.

Islam, a younger religion than Christianity but one which honors Jesus as a prophet, argues that the trinity was an invention of overenthusiastic followers of Jesus; Jesus, Islam asserts, never claimed to be Son of God. Monotheism in Islam is uncompromising.

Islam is also uncompromising in the majesty it accords Allah. Since there is no equivalent to a prince in rags on earth, descending from Heaven, the majesty of the being is not tempered by the humility of an offspring. Islam, therefore, has a greater propensity for dichotomizing than Christianity.

Furthermore, the culture of politics has conditioned Islam more directly than it has affected Christian doctrine. This is partly because the founder of Islam, unlike the founders of most great religions, underwent upward political mobility in his lifetime and became a head of state. Whereas Jesus and Buddha were, according to their followers, princes who decided to descend to the level of the common people and to teach them uncommon things, Muhammad was a humble camel driver who lived to become head of state and to lay the foundations of an empire here on earth.

One consequence of Muhammad's upward political mobility was the need for a system of law and judicial order. The system thus devised was the Shari'a, the Islamic Law. Muhammad's political role stood in clear contrast to the role of Jesus, assumed as founder of Christianity. After all, if the main mission of a founder of a religion is self-sacrifice, with a crucifixion serving

to underscore atonement, there is no need to devise an elaborate system of social and political control for society. On the contrary, Jesus' crucifixion was at best a judgment on the existing laws of a particular society; it was not a blueprint for an alternative judicial order.

The prophet of Islam, on the other hand, had to rule and exercise authority; the innocent had to be protected, the guilty had to be discouraged or punished, and society had to be strengthened. The Shari'a was born: a system of vice and virtue, crime and punishment, reward and sanction – that was at once one of the glories of Islam and one of its shackles. The trend towards dualism, so characteristic of monotheism and the culture of politics, was consolidated in Islam by the political success of the prophet Muhammad and his immediate successors.

Judaism is, of course, as monotheistic as Islam, and more so than Christianity, since Judaism is not as encumbered by the doctrine of three-in-one and one-in-three. The tendency toward dichotomizing and dualism is also strong in both Jewish history and Jewish doctrine. It certainly conditions the Jewish paradigm of identity – Jews on the one side, and Gentiles on the other.

The identity crisis of Jews confronting the rest of the human race has taken a variety of forms over the centuries, and has been reinforced by the exodus from Palestine, the general Jewish dispersal, and the historical experience of discrimination and martyrdom. Political Zionism in its modern manifestation was born partly as a dichotomy between a Jewish "us" and a Gentile "them". There had to be a Jewish state to protect the Jews against the world. Hitler's holocaust vindicated some of these Jewish fears. Zionism gathered momentum – and Israel was born.

The tragedy of dichotomizing continued. Could not Jews live in Palestine without partitioning the territory? For the Jews, the answer was no – there had to be a separate Jewish state. Of course, the practicalities of creating a separate state were more complicated than the doctrines. On balance, many Zionists believed in a total dichotomy so that ideally there would be no Arabs at all in the land of Israel. To paraphrase Rudyard Kipling: "Jews are Jews and Arabs are Arabs – and never the twain shall meet!"

But in practice there were "too many" Arabs still in the land of Palestine. Even after partition, and the efforts of many Zionist zealots to frighten Arab peasants out of Israel, an Arab presence in the new land of the Jews remained. The Zionist dichotomies failed to accomplish complete purification.

Within Israel, the culture of politics was influenced by the theocratic heritage of monotheism. Jehovah was king. Citizenship in the Israeli state was in part religiously defined and the law of Return of Israel offered the embrace of citizenship to all those professing the genuine Jewish faith all over the world.[1]

The general laws of Israel are, on the whole, in the tradition of Western liberal democracy rather than centralized theocracy. But the idea that the state is under some kind of divine jurisdiction has influenced the political culture of Israeli society; sometimes it is accepted literally by right wing parties and movements, and by leaders like Menachim Begin. Once again, the dichotomizing tendency in the culture of politics, combined with the anthropomorphic conception of God as king within a monotheistic framework, have sharpened the dualism of "us" and "them."

But to what extent have these tendencies affected the wider international and world order? It is to this transnational and global level of analysis that we now turn.

Towards globalizing the sacred order

Of the three monotheistic religions under review in this essay, Judaism has had a less direct impact on the existing world order than Islam or Christianity. Indirect Jewish influences have been diverse, ranging from the impact of Jewish jurists and thinkers upon international law to repercussions surrounding the creation of Israel and the introduction of Jewish elements to Islamic and Christian doctrines, to the tantalizing question whether Karl Marx was one of the last of the Jewish prophets. There can therefore be little doubt that Judaism has been a major contributory force to the world of rules and ideas as we know it today. But in terms of direct impact on the structure of the world system as it exists, Christianity has been a far more fundamental force, with Islam trailing significantly behind as a secondary force.

In Islam, the trend towards dichotomizing at the international level took the form of a division of the world into *Dar el Islam* (the Abode of Islam) and *Dar el Harb* (the Abode of War). The Abode of Islam was, by definition, governed by shared values and principles and by shared allegiance to that ultimate of all sovereigns, God. Within the world of Islam, the rules of intersocietal relations assumed the bonds of community. Indeed, Muslims all over the world were supposed to constitute an *Umma* – a community and a people – with the culture of Islam serving as the bond of commonality.

As for the Abode of War, its meaning is close to Thomas Hobbes's view, many centuries after the founding of Islam, that where there is no shared sovereign, conditions amount to a state of war. Every man is for himself, with the persistent danger that the life of man might become "nasty, brutish and short." Hobbes was interested more in civil society than in the broader world community as a whole, but his conception of the state of war has

often been internationalized. It has indeed been suggested that the world system, in the absence of a world government, is characterized by conditions amounting to an immanent state of war. Under this state, in Hobbes's terms, people need not actually fight. The main question is whether, in the absence of the leviathan and of shared rules, war is the final resort. Similarly, *Dar el Harb* assumed that lands not governed by shared principles, and not recognizing shared allegiance to the one God, were potential theatres of war.

Future Islamic jurists attempted to modify the strong dichotomy in Islamic international law between *Dar el Harb* and *Dar el Islam*. Intermediate categories were sometimes devised, partly to allow for special alliances between Islam and friendly non-Muslims, and partly to accommodate the distinctive conditions in places like India where Hindu and Muslim rulers constituted a complex pattern of subcontinental relationships.

The division of the world in this manner may be a living residual element in the political thinking of rulers like the Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran and Muammar Gaddafy of Libya. In less stark forms, the dichotomy may underlie even the more peaceful Islamic movements and the global Islamic conference that came into being in recent years. The "us" and the "them" persists as an aspect of Islamic political culture.

The dichotomous tendency of Islamic international law has its equivalent in Western international law. It is worth remembering that the origins of the present international system as a whole, including contemporary international law and its usages, go back to Europe and its culture. Originally, the polarized stratification of the world was, at least in part, religious. World order was for a while perceived as an order of Christian faith: international law was for Christendom. There was a time when community in Europe was defined, not merely in terms of shared values and culture, but also in terms of the supreme power of the Pope and, in a substantial part of Europe, of this Emperor or that one. In other words, communal ties included shared political and religious authority, which could be traced to some extent to Roman Emperor Constantine the Great's conversion to Christianity in the seventh century.

Much later, the Christian nations of Europe formulated rules of international conduct, but they perceived themselves as *Christian* nations. As B.V.A. Roling once put it:

> Those Christian Nations emanated from the spiritual unity prevailing in Western Europe before the Reformation. After the overthrow of the supreme power of Pope and Emperor and the acceptance of the concept of national sovereignty, the monarchs of Europe continued to consider themselves subject to God's Commandments and the law of nature... The Christian States considered themselves bound by Christian law. Christianity was the source of their standards. In addition, each determined the circle within which law should

prevail: a different law, or none at all, held good for relations with heathens. Finally, Christianity was the justification of the domination of other peoples.[3]

Roling traces the legalistic dichotomy between Christians and "heathens" at least to the Lateran Council of 1139. This forbade, *sub anathema*, the use of the crossbow among Christian knights, *adversos Christianos et Catholicos*. It was accepted that Christian standards did not apply to heathens and heretics.

Roling also refers to an interesting early illustration of germ warfare. In 1649–1650, *Christians* decided to use "pestilential vapors" against the Turkish in Crete. They sent a certain Dr. Michelangelo. His mission was to infect the Turkish army with his "quintessence of the pest." This exercise in biological warfare was rationalized officially at the time by the old crusading argument: "...The usual considerations do not apply to the Turks who are enemies by religion, treacherous by nature and who have betrayed your excellencies."[3]

Implicit in all this is once again a dichotomy – this time between the Abode of Christianity and the Abode of War, a mirror reflection of *Dar el Islam* and *Dar el Harb*. And underlying that dualism is once again a definition of community based on shared values and faith. In Shakespeare's *Henry the Sixth*, Gloucester suggests that a sacred order is "the only means to stop the effusion of Christian blood." Gloucester reflects :

> . . . I always thought
> It was both impious and unnatural,
> That such immanity and blood strife
> Should reign among professors of one Faith.[4]

Dichotomization between Christian nations and barbarians of other faiths has persisted in different forms in the Western world, albeit in subtle ways. A former Dutch prime minister is reported to have wondered in Parliament how a Muslim or Hindu could really grasp the essence of aggression – since this judgment, according to him, required the sensibilities of Christian culture. An American diplomat, engaged in the quest for a solution to Arab–Israeli conflicts in the 1950s, inadvertently drifted into advising the Jews and Arabs "to settle the conflict in a true Christian spirit."[5] More recently, many Christians in the West have probably discovered that their attitudes to the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran are very similar to the attitudes their grandfathers held in the 19th century towards the abstract "Turk."

What these situations reveal is not merely the relevance of culture to international polarization but also its relevance to international stratification. Polarization is a horizontal divide, a cleavage and possible confrontation which could be between equals. Stratification, on the other hand, is a vertical divide – a confrontation between the privileged and the underprivileged,

the dominant and the oppressed, the higher in status and the lower. Our examples reflect an earlier phase of culturally defined international stratification. Then the pecking order existed on the basis of who believed what, rather than on the basis of who owned what. The international class structure was culturally derived rather than economically based – at least in those earlier days when religious solidarity was an explicit foundation of what was later to become the Law of Nations.

Secularism and the civilizational hierarchy

But the cultural frontier of Western international law had in fact been moving – redefining the class divide. Instead of international law being a law for Christian nations, it became for a while a law for civilized nations – one of the costs of the secularization of world order. It is arguable that modern race consciousness has its origins in the decline of religion in Europe, since to some extent the development of race consciousness paralleled the evolution of the nation-state. Religious tensions in Europe between Catholics and Protestants first culminated in the treaty of Augsburg in 1555, which fused religion with sovereignty. The religion of the prince was deemed to be the religion of the principality; the king's faith was the faith of the kingdom. This was the famous doctrine of "*Cu ius Regio Eius Religio.*"

In reality, the decision to equate the religion of the king with the religion of the kingdom was a principle of no interference in the various princes' internal religious affairs. But this *modus vivendi* broke down when Europe undercut the agonies of the Thirty Years' War. Out of that war emerged the Treaty of Westphalia, which laid the foundations of the modern state system and the principles of modern conceptions of sovereignty.

This secularization of allegiance (to the State rather than through the Church) which came with Westphalia led to secularization of *identity*. Nations and races became visible more as categories than as religious committees.

Out of this parallel development emerged new theories of racial gradation and ethnic stratification. But, in the ultimate analysis, the great divide was between the civilized and the uncivilized, defined both in terms of a pecking order of cultures and a pecking order of pigmentation. Even such a devout Western lover of liberty as John Stuart Mill could argue that 'barbarians' had no rights except the right to be converted into nations as rapidly as possible. As for the application of international law, this once again required not only a horizontal homogeneity of values, but also vertical

equality of civilization. According to Mill:

> There is a great difference between the case in which the nations concerned are of the same, or something like the same, degree of civilization, and that in which one of the parties to the situation is of a high, and the other of a very low, grade of social improvement. To suppose that the same international customs, and the same rules of international morality, can obtain between one civilized nation and another and between civilized nations and barbarians, is a grave error, and one which no statesman can fall into, however it may be that those who, from a safe and unresponsible position, criticize statesmen . . . To characterize any conduct towards the barbarous people as a violation of the Law of Nations only shows that he who so speaks has never considered the subject.[6]

This approach to the dichotomy between civilization and barbarism was by no means unique to liberalism. It also characterized the thinking of those founding fathers of modern radicalism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Engels was delighted by the French conquest of Algeria. He regarded it as an important and fortunate development in the whole progress of civilization:

> And the conquest of Algeria has already forced the Bays of Tunis and Tripoli and even the Emperor of Morocco, to enter upon the path of civilization. . . All these nations of free barbarians look very proud, noble, glorious at a distance, but only come near them and you will find that they, as well as the more civilized nations, are ruled by the lust of Cain, and only employ ruder and more cruel means. And after all, the modern bourgeois, with civilization, industry, order, and at least relative enlightenment following him, is preferable to the feudal lord or to the marauding robber, with the barbarian state of society to which they belong.[7]

Engels' partner, Karl Marx, was more sophisticated in his defense of British rule in India. Marx saw Western imperialism as an engine of progress in Asia and Africa. On 25 January, 185[illegible], Karl Marx made the following observation:

> English interference [in India]...produced the greatest and, so to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia. Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness myriads of industrial, patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. . .England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindoostan, was activated by only the vilest of interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is: Can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about the revolution.
>
> But then whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of an ancient world may

have for our personal feelings, we have the right to exclaim with Goethe:

> Should this torture then torment us?
> Since it brings us great pleasure?
> Was not through the rule of Timur
> Souls devoured without measure?

Karl Marx later formulated his own version of "the Dual Mandate" in Asia :

> England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating – the annihilation of all Asiatic societies, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia.[8]

The major difference between Karl Marx and Rudyard Kipling, the author of "The White Man's Burden," is that Kipling made a virtue out of the unintended constructive consequences of imperialism, whereas Marx recognized the developmental effects of British rule in India as primarily amoral and incidental. Rudyard Kipling took this developmental side effect of imperialism to a level of self-righteousness.

What emerges from this comparison between John Stuart Mill, on one side, and Marx and Engels, on the other, is a shared belief in the superiority of Western civilization and the shared conviction that the civilized had a right to dominate and even exploit the barbarians. Once again the dualistic paradigm was at play – articulated, on one side, by a highly secularized product of monotheistic Westernism (John Stuart Mill) and, on the other, by a highly secularized product of Hebraic intellectualism (Marx).

Cultural stratification did lay the foundations of imperialism not just in Algeria and India but elsewhere in Asia and Africa. Even as late as World War II, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt could sign the Atlantic Charter affirming the rights of peoples everywhere to control their own destiny. And yet, the same Churchill, when questioned in the House of Commons in London soon after, could sharply differentiate between the freedom of the Belgians under the Nazis – a freedom which needed to be encouraged – and freedom of the colonized peoples of the British Empire, which Churchill regarded as an entirely different matter. Not very long after, when confronted with the demands of India to become independent, Winston Churchill, the signatory of the Atlantic Charter with its ringing acknowledgement of the rights of self-determination, could nevertheless refuse to "preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

Once again, the basic dichotomy between the "civilized" and the "uncivilized" was at play even if no longer articulated in those terms. Community and stratification were culturally defined once again.

Because the term "civilized nations" was used to justify European imperialism, it began to decline in public usage with the rise of nationalism in Asia and Africa. The new assertiveness of the colonized peoples and their sense of dignity gradually discouraged Europeans from talking about them as "barbarians" and "heathens."

A related factor was the revolution in communications. When, in the 19th century, people like John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx discussed Indians, other Asians, and Africans as "uncivilized", they were sure that much of the conversation was almost exclusively among Westerners themselves. Literacy was still very low in Africa and Asia, and books written in England were not likely to constitute bedtime reading in the Orient. Nor were there news agencies that transmitted public utterances made in London or New York to radio listeners or to newspaper readers in Lagos or Bombay. In terms of blunt racialistic language, Europeans in the 19th century could comfortably speak their minds about nonwhite people without risking the embarrassment of reaction from those people. International eavesdropping in the 19th century was significantly more modest than it has since become.

By the time the United Nations Organization was formed in 1945, it no longer made sense to think of restricting membership to "civilized nations." It was also much too late to return to the old language of "Christian nations". Yet, in a sense, there was a partial return to Jesus as the Prince of Peace since the Charter of the United Nations designated the membership as "peace loving nations" – a concept first used in the Moscow Declaration on General Security on 30 October, 1943. But the United Nations' emphasis on peace went beyond the concept of "peace loving nations." Those who framed the Charter in 1945 first declared their determination to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", and then, only secondarily, to "reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and the equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small."

Whether the framers of the Charter realized it or not, their document betrayed a historic Christian tendency to regard peace and "love" as an answer to the scourge of war. Indeed, the English wording of "peace-loving" encompasses the two most central concepts in Christian ethics – precisely, peace and love. Justice, on the other hand, is quite often a different framework of reasoning. The ethic of turning the other cheek is consistent with the pursuit of peace and love, but it may seldom be consistent with the pursuit of social justice.

The God of Christianity has doctrinally been regarded as a god of love, and his Son has been regarded as a Prince of Peace. The God of Islam and

Judaism, on the other hand, has been more a god of justice – ready to invoke sanctions against violators and capable of purposeful ruthlessness in defense of divine justice and order.

When the French rose up in arms against their own *ancien regime* in 1789, they wanted to tear down the Church as well. They did tear down the monasteries that had encouraged the poor to turn the other cheek while the rich puffed their own cheeks in luxurious living. The French Revolution was almost as anticlerical as it was antimonarchical.

When the Russians overthrew their own Czarist imperial system in the October revolution of 1917, they were rebelling against their nobility in an idiom which was also profoundly distrustful of religion. In the poetry of Karl Marx: "Religion is a sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of souless conditions. It is the opium of the people."

Both Czarist Russia and prerevolutionary France were Christian countries. Popular rebellion against injustice, therefore, encompassed rebellion against religious institutions as well.

Iran, on the other hand, is a Muslim country. Popular rebellion in 1979 against political injustice was far from being simultaneously a rebellion against religious institutions. On the contrary, the call to revolution against the Shah was often couched in fervent religious terms. The god of justice in Islam encouraged at times resort to arms in defense of Muslim justice. The god of love in Christianity, on the other hand, was more comfortable with the doctrine of loving one's enemy and turning the other cheek.

In reality, Christian nations (as distinct from devout individual Christians) have never been all that "peaceloving." Many use the idiom of Christianity to disarm their own people, to "pacify" rebellious natives and, thereby, to promote acceptance of imperial rule. Even the idea of giving to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's was often a call to obedience and submission to Caesar – in the name of God! Similarly, when the United Nations came into being, the language of peaceful solutions was often invoked to legitimize a *status quo* in which those already possessing might could secure their privileges while the "have-nots" would be encouraged to accept their lot for the time being.

The United States also used the concept of "peace-loving nations" as a basis for excluding the People's Republic of China from the United Nations for more than 20 years; China's seat on the Security Council, complete with the big power veto that went with it, was allowed to be occupied by Taiwan throughout that period. In debates concerning the credentials of the People's Republic of China for occupying that seat, the United States – year in, year out – invoked the argument that the People's Republic was not a "peace-loving nation," and was not therefore the right "China" for the

United Nations. After all, so the argument went, Article IV of the United Nations Charter restricted membership t: those countries which were "peace-keeping."

But as more and more countries from Africa and Asia became members of the United Nations, a normative change was discernible both in voting patterns and in the emphasis placed on certain Charter provisions. For the new nations of Africa and Asia, issues of social justice were more important than issues of peace and war prevention. The Prince of Peace at the United Nations was demoted as the world body became culturally and ideologically more diverse. Instead of trying to keep out the People's Republic of China on the argument that it was not peace-loving, the majority of the members were now more inclined to keep out the Republic of South Africa on the argument that it was guilty of gross injustices. Even Israel has, from time to time, been a target of demands for exclusion; but, in the Israeli case, the basis for attack has rested on issues both of peace and of social justice. Was Israel peace-loving enough? This question echoed the earlier vocabulary of the Messiah of Peace. Was Israel sufficiently respectful of human rights and social justice? The second question revealed the new concerns of the formerly colonized nations of Africa, Asia and the rest of the Third World.

But issues of social justice go beyond colonialism, racism and military occupation; they also include economic dimensions. And here, the tradition of dichotomization has continued. Under the new dualism, the world is perceived in terms of developed countries, on one side, and developing countries, on the other. From a world system involving Christians versus non-Christians, civilized versus noncivilized, peace-loving versus non-peace-loving, we have now entered the world of development as the central divide in the configuration of the globe.

Outside the United Nations, issues of war and peace, of course, remain quite fundamental. UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim himself reminded the world in June 1980 that it was spending a million dollars a minute in armaments, and had acquired the capacity to destroy the human race ten times over. The imperative of being "peace-loving" had in this sense become more vital than in the days of the Prince of Peace. And yet, the causes of war were not simply attitudinal; they were also structural.

The most dangerous arena from the point of view of peace is the arena of East-West relations. This is a dichotomy within a dichotomy. The world of communism occupies one side, and the world of capitalism the other. Since each accuses the other of "war-mongering," the idiom of peace is characteristic of the rhetoric on both parts of the Northern hemisphere – Northwest (the capitalist world) and Northeast (the Soviet Union and its allies).

At the height of the cold war, the United States regarded the Soviet Union as fundamentally expansionist, and communism as fundamentally aggressive.

At the beginning of the 1950s, the United States was sufficiently in control of the United Nations to rally the world body in defense of the independence of South Korea. When the Security Council appeared paralyzed by the Soviet veto, the United States took the issue to the General Assembly, and successfully invented the idea of "uniting for peace." The world body became the banner for defense for South Korea against the incursion of North Korea and the Chinese, and entered a regional war in the name of world peace.

Since then, the United Nations has taken part in a variety of other situations of conflict, but not in the direct combatant role that it assumed in Korea. In defense of peace, major international assignments for the world body have ranged from involvement in the Middle East to efforts to save the Congo (now Zaire) from chaos, to Cyprus, to General Assembly censure of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

But the United States and its allies have by no means monopolized the language of peace. The Soviet Union has managed to infuse both an ideology of revolution and a rhetoric of peace into the proceedings. A variety of recommendations have emerged from Moscow over the years concerning proposed principles of "peaceful coexistence." The Soviet Union has also often paid lip service to the goal of total and compiete disarmament, though never with an adequate acceptance of the type of safeguards that would be needed to monitor such a process. The value of peace remains honored in words, though not always in deeds. The world needs peace as a moral ideal more than ever – since the world's very survival may depend upon it. But the stratification system of the globe is no longer conceived in terms of peace-loving nations on one side and peace-haters on the other. The central dichotomy has now become technological; it is between developed and developing.

It is to this last dichotomy that we now turn.

Monotheism and development

If one looks at the history of the international system in the last 600 years, there has been a transition from dualism based on faith to dualism based on know-how. The world which distinguished *Dar el Harb* from *Dar el Islam*, Christian nations from heathen, still puts emphasis on confessional credentials for participation within a communal system. But the world which distinguishes between developed and developing countries now invokes credentials of technical know-how and expertise.

If one looks at the geographical area designated in the 19th century by the term "civilized world," it still strongly coincides with what today is called the

developed world; the barbarians and heathens of the 19th century are today the developing societies of Africa and Asia.

And even if one went further back in time and looked at the word *Christendom* as conceived in the 17th century before the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia, one would be talking about a considerable fraction of what is today the industrialized world.

We may therefore say that the transition from religious dualism to civilizational dualism, to the developmental dualism has been direct. Once we allow for the fact that Europeans populated and "developed" much of the Western hemisphere, it is apparent that these terms apply to approximately the same geographical areas across the centuries.

What lies outside the straight transition of religion, civilization and technology is the dualism of peace. It is as if this particular component was not really a stage in a transition from the seventh century but was rather a continuing subtheme in global history, whose latest incarnation includes the role of the United Nations in areas of human conflict.

And yet, in another sense, even the latest cleavage based on technology has its origins in the years when the cleavage was based on religion. Modern technology was born out of modern capitalism, and modern capitalism was in part born out of the same causes which gave rise to religious wars in Europe. The Protestant revolution helped transform the value patterns in the economic domain of behavior, not merely in the religious domain. I find the Weberian thesis substantially persuasive – that there is a link between the rise of capitalism and the Protestant ethic. Protestantism helped make what was previously the sin of "avarice" morally respectable. Indeed, the pursuit of worldly success was now deemed to be a good way of measuring whether one was in good standing with the King of Kings. Piety was not manifested merely in prayer, but also in work and business. The Calvinistic notion of God was particularly monarchical. Human beings were subjects of the Lord, and in need of Grace; their fates were often sealed within the doctrine of predestination. Nevertheless, this doctrine did not become another version of fatalism because it was accompanied by a doctrine suggesting that people must struggle to discover whether they are among the saved. Evidence of salvation could take the form of prosperity and material success. In other words, responding to one's calling was an important part of the quest for salvation.

In addition, the puritanical factor in Calvinism prepared the way for economic accumulation. On the one hand, the pious were encouraged to acquire more and more; but, on the other, they were not encouraged to consume more and more. "Make money, but do not spend it!" – this seemed to be the ultimate commercial imperative operating within the Protestant ethic. Given that life-styles were supposed to be austere, the alternatives open to

those who made more money were: (i) to save the surplus, (ii) to reinvest it, and (iii) to do both simultaneously. With this accumulation of capital and entrepreneurial drive, the stage was set in Europe for a capitalist takeoff. And as the capitalist revolution matured, the industrial revolution got under way as part of a cumulative process of developmental change.[9]

But it was not merely the rise of capitalism with which Protestantism seems to have been linked; it was also linked with the rise of modern science. In England, the Royal Society, overwhelmingly Protestant by the 17th century, was also disproportionately *Puritan*. The men of science in England seemed to be nonconformists – the majority being neither Catholic nor Anglican. Cambridge University became more scientifically oriented than Oxford, partly because it was more nonconformist in religious composition. The origins of the scientific bias, displayed by Cambridge in the modern period, may well lie in that phase of high Puritan influence exhibited in the 17th century.

In the United States, too, the Puritan influence on the growth of the scientific spirit was considerable. Part of the influence came through Cambridge University in England, described in that period as the *alma mater* of the Puritans (of the 20 leading Puritan clergymen in New England, 17 were graduates of Cambridge, and only three of Oxford). However, its educational program also felt this Puritan influence. The sciences in the United States were certainly upheld better in Protestant than in Catholic institutions; within Protestant circles, the Puritan bias towards scientificity stood out.[10]

If there was a heavy Protestant factor in the scientific revolution, on one side, and also a disproportionate Protestant factor in the rise of capitalism, on the other, the two processes together (the mating of science with the economy) helped to create a technological momentum. The world of faith had interacted with the world of technical know-how and laid the foundations for this latest dichotomy in the global structure – the dichotomy between the developed and the underdeveloped, the technically knowledgeable and the technically preliterate. Western civilization is still triumphant – but the credentials of supremacy are technological rather than spiritual.

Two major challenges to the West have now emerged, one of which echoes the old Crusades. Islam, which has been undergoing a new resurgence on the world scene, is one challenge. The other is Marxism, which has been making new converts in the global seminaries of values.

As it happens, Islam is of course militantly monotheistic; Marxism is self-consciously atheistic. This new bipolarity captures the contemporary predicament of Western civilization as a whole – which indeed exists somewhere "between the sacred and the secular, the monotheistic and the atheistic,"

The Islamic challenge to the West, because of its very nature, is a challenge from the sacred. The Marxist challenge to the West attempts to be a challenge from the secular. Islam seeks to reintroduce God to international relations, a partial return to a sacred world order. Marxism seeks to subtract capital from international relations, a quest to reverse the Protestant revolution. Islam's challenge to the West is the challenge from the South; it is vertical, since leaders of Islam are overwhelmingly Southern. Marxism's challenge to the West is a challenge from the East; it is horizontal, since leaders of old Marxism are overwhelmingly Northern. Islam's challenge to the West betrays concern for cultural authenticity; the Marxist challenge is ultimately inspired by economic equity.

But in the final analysis, the world of Islam, the world of Marxism and Western civilization are interrelated systems of values and ideas. Islam's challenge of the West is a challenge from a cousin. Western values and Islamic ideas were both profoundly conditioned and influenced by Judaism. In addition, Western values and Islamic scholarship were conditioned and influenced by the civilization of ancient Greece.

Marxism, on the other hand, is a *child* of the West. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were themselves Westerners and their theories and ideas emerged out of Western intellectual and economic history. In that sense, the confrontation between Marxism and Western civilization is between a parent and the offspring; it is an intergenerational conflict in the realm of ideas and values.

Simultaneously, the center of the economic world is still basically mono–theistic in culture. The greatest exporters of oil are Muslims; the greatest importers of oil are Christians. The exporters include Saudi Arabia, the heartland of Sunni Islam, and Iran, the heartland of Shi'a Islam, as well as a majority of the rest of the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The greatest importers of oil include Western Europe and the United States. Japan remains the striking exception to the rule that the greatest capitalist countries are also of Christian cultural persuasion. Again, apart from Japan, ultimate leadership in technology continues to coincide with cultures that were originally Christian. In turn, their need for energy continues to link them with countries which are self–consciously Islamic.

Technology seemed destined to be the last cultural frontier of the first two millennia of the Christian era. Only a few more years are left of the second millennium. Christianity itself has declined in its heartland; that is, in the Western world. And yet the cultures of monotheism continue to cast a shadow on world events. The center of the world economy is still Christo–Islamic. Monotheism as a doctrine may no longer condition behavior and perspectives directly, but the heritage of dualism persists. The latest cultural

frontier between the "haves" and the "have-nots" is, in the ultimate analysis, technological.

Conclusion

We have sought to demonstrate in this essay that there is a hidden cultural agenda in world order problems which ranges from dogma (both sacred and secular) to international stratification. A particularly important perceptual factor is the tendency towards dualism in the mode of identification – the culture of "us" and "them." The tendency towards two opposing foci, thus, did not begin with the cold war and the division of the world between capitalists and communists, but goes back to that basic dichotomizing tendency which some cultures emphasize more than others.

Although the cultural frontier of world order has indeed been moving, monotheism, weakened by the decline of religion generally, continues to cast its shadow over international relations and world affairs. As Western civilization has become increasingly secularized, its two greatest challenges have been, on one side, militant monotheism (Islam) and, on the other, self-conscious atheism (Marxism). But, as we pointed out, Marxism, Western civilization and Islam are interrelated. The dialectic in Marxism is dualistic; so is the constant tension between good and evil in both Christianity and Islam. Thus the map of world power today is a map covered by Islam, Western civilization, and Marxist systems. All three cultural universes betray the historic and normative impact of monotheism and its derivative patterns of cognition. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was of God, and the Word was God."

NOTES

1. The Black Falasha Jews of Ethiopia were for a long time denied recognition as genuine Jews. The Law of Return did not apply to them for many years. But their status was changed progressively in the course of the 1970s. On the other hand, ethnic Jews from Eastern Europe who are often complete aetheists have enthusiastic access under the Law of Return.

2. B.V.A. Roling, *International Law in an Expanded World* (Amsterdam: Djambatan, 1960), pp. 17–18.

3. Sir George Clark, *War and Society in the 17th Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 88. Cited by Roling, ibid, p. 18.

4. *Henry the Sixth*, Part 1, Act V, Scene 1.

5. For the references to the former Dutch prime minister and the American diplomat goof, see Roling (f. n. 2), pp. 21–22.

6. John Stuart Mill, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention," in *Dissertations and Discussions*, Volume 3 (London, 1967), pp. 153-158.

7. Friedrich Engels, article for the *Northern Star* (English Chartist Newspaper), Volume XI, January 22, 1848.

8. Consult Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India (August 8, 1853)," Schlomo Aveniri (ed.), *Marx on Colonialism and Modernization* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 94–95; 132–134. I am also greatly indebted to my former student, Dr. Rovan Locke, for stimulation and bibliographical guidance on Marx's theories of cultural stratification.

9. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribners, 1977); see also R.H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York: New American Library, 1954).

10. Consult Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), pp. 574–605.

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